



# Lake Mead National Recreation Area Environmental Education

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## **CLASSROOM PROGRAM**

### **Grade 1**

### **“Animals Among Us”**



#### **THEME**

Though animals of the Mojave Desert share a common environment, they belong to different groups that represent the fascinating world of the Animal Kingdom.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Students will sort desert animal photos of mammals, reptiles and birds.  
Students will compare at least one difference between two mammals, two birds, and two reptiles.

#### **VOCABULARY**

zoology - the branch of science dealing with the study of animals and animal life

mammal - a warm-blooded (endothermic-having a body temperature that is independent of the temperature of the environment) animal that has a back bone, feeds its young with it's own milk, and skin more or less covered with hair or fur

bird - a warm-blooded animal that has a backbone, wings, a beak, and skin covered with feathers

reptile - a cold-blooded (exothermic-having a body temperature that varies with the temperature of the environment) animal that has a backbone, and skin covered with scales or bony plates



## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Scientists who study animals, animal groups, and animal life are called zoologists. Animals are classified or grouped by common characteristics so that members of each group are similar to one another and unlike members of other groups. Scientists have grouped all the animals with backbones (called vertebrates) into five commonly recognized classes: mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fish. One way that vertebrates differ is by their skin covering. Mammals are more or less covered with hair or fur, while birds are covered with feathers. Reptiles have scales and bony plates. Animals with backbones comprise just a small portion of the total number of animal groups found on earth. A wide variety of animals live in the Mojave Desert. Each species has different ways of surviving the challenges of desert living.

## **BEFORE THE RANGER VISITS YOUR CLASSROOM**

What type of animals do your students have as pets? Have students discuss the similarities and differences of their pets.

## **AFTER THE RANGER VISITS YOUR CLASSROOM**

Have each student draw a picture of their favorite desert animal and a picture of themselves. Compare the similarities and differences.

## **REFERENCES**

Braus, Judy, editor, *Ranger Rick's Nature Scope - Discovering Deserts*,  
National Wildlife Federation, (1985)

Cornett, James W., *Wildlife of the North American Deserts*,  
Nature Trails Press, (1987)

MacMahon, James A., *Deserts*, Alfred A. Knopf, (1986)



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